

RESEARCH  
AND  
EVALUATION PROJECTS  
1974 AND 1975

OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND EVALUATION  
Minnesota Department of Public Welfare

March, 1976

76-EMR-MNM

CX 12 74-1 EVALUATION OF THE MR GROUP HOME PROJECT, REGION IV, MINNESOTA.  
Marilyn Moen, Dennis Bogen, David Aanes.

The Lakeland Group Home Project in Region IV, Minnesota was authorized by the 1969 Minnesota Legislature and became operational in 1970. It includes 11 group homes licensed to care for mentally retarded persons age 21 and over. At the time of this study (February of 1974), 65 individuals were residing in the homes. This project attempted to assess the continued development of these residents, and yielded 4 separate reports, listed below with their respective methods and major findings:

Part I. A Comparison of ABS Scores of Group Home Residents With Those of a Hypothetical New Resident. The Adaptive Behavior Scale was completed for each resident living in the homes, with the help of the respective group home parent, and each parent also completed an ABS stating what minimal behavior level would be acceptable for a new resident to enter each home. The group home parents appear to be willing to accept residents whose level of functioning is lower than the residents presently in the home, but a necessary condition seems to be ambulation.

Part II. Developing the ABS Group Home Resident Profile to Assist in the Identification of Potential Community Placement Candidates. The ABS scores collected above were combined to present a descriptive profile of mentally retarded individuals residing in group homes in the community. The profile is for all the scales of the ABS, presented in terms of distance from normal functioning on such items as eating skills, locomotion, sensory development, violent and destructive behavior, hyperactive tendencies, etc. Potentially very important uses of such a profile are discussed. The community profile could be compared to a given hospital profile to identify the existence of community placement candidates; a comparison of state hospitals on the factor of the proportion of community placement candidates could be made (which would, in part at least, identify communities that have few homes for placement); the profile could be used in its traditional manner to identify educational needs for community residents, implying program development needs; or it could be used to assess change over time in a group of community placement group home residents.

Part III. Various Aspects of Group Home Life As Seen by the Group Home Parent. The group home parents were interviewed with a structured questionnaire developed to assess the homes on items descriptive of the living environment and the relationship of the group home to other agencies and the surrounding community. It was found that, from the standpoint of the group home parents, the living environment of the homes allowed considerable individual freedom for residents, communities generally have responded favorably to the group homes, 17% of the residents are seen as potentially capable of moving into an even more independent living situation, and interagency coordination of goal planning for group home residents is minimal.

12 74-1 continued

Part IV. Placement of the Mentally Retarded in Community Group Homes: A Comparison of Successes and Failures. From April, 1970 to February, 1974, 85 individuals were placed in the group homes directly from FFSH, and an additional 7 were placed from the community. Of the hospital group, 85% were considered to be successful placements (defined as not requiring a return to former living status, i.e., they didn't have to go back to the hospital). This report contrasts the successes and failures, utilizing hospital case files. It was found that the group home parents successfully coped with a large number of behavior problems, but that aggressive behaviors and toileting problems do appear to be more frequent in the "failure" group. Group home parents tend to see basic living skills as most important, as compared to learning skills. They are less concerned with speech pathology than with social skills. For the residents returned to the hospital, the average time spent in the group home before the return was more than three months, indicating a strong willingness on the part of the group home parent to "give the placement a real try".

Type: PROGRAM EVALUATION RESEARCH  
Program effectiveness  
Goal attainment  
-and-  
Movement status changes  
-and-  
Program side effects

Funding: Routine local support

Status: Completed in 1974